

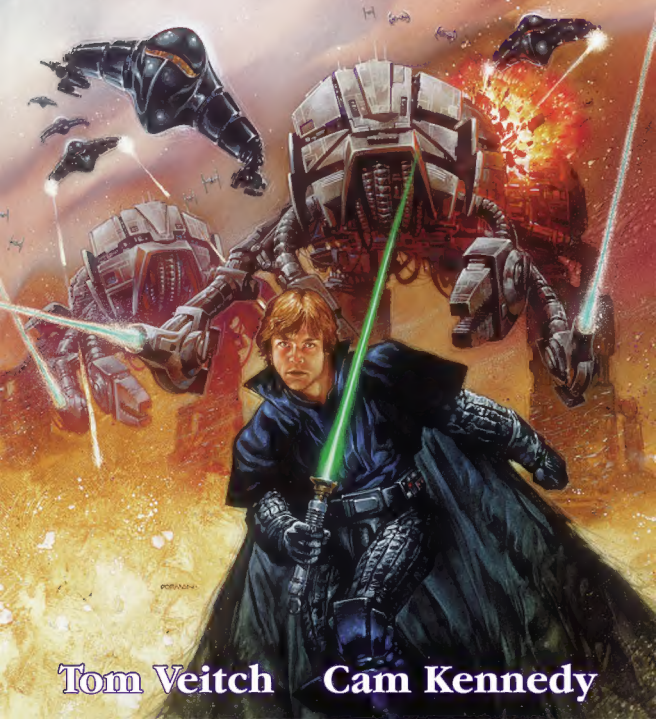


STAR WARS
DARK EMPIRE II
1 OF 6

\$2.95 US
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STAR WARS

DARK EMPIRE II



Tom Veitch Cam Kennedy

STAR WARS®

DARK EMPIRE II

Tom Veitch..... Script
Cam Kennedy..... Art
Todd Klein..... Lettering
Dave Dorman..... Cover Art

Scott Tice
Book Design

Dan Thorsland & Ryder Windham
Editors

Special Thanks to
Lucy Autrey Wilson, Sue Rostoni,
& Allan Kausch



Mike Richardson publisher

Neil Hankerson executive vice president • David Scroggy v.p. of publishing
Lou Bank v.p. of sales & marketing • Andy Karabatsos v.p. of finance
Mark Anderson general counsel • Diana Schutz editor in chief
Randy Stradley creative director • Cindy Marks director of production & design
Mark Cox art director • Chris Creviston director of accounting
Michael Martens marketing director • Tod Borleske sales and licensing director
Mark Ellington director of operations • Dale LaFountain director of m.i.s.

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Operation Shadow Hand

Luke Skywalker's bold attempt to learn the dark-side secrets of Emperor Palpatine nearly ended in disaster for Luke and for the Rebel Alliance.

But thanks to Luke's Jedi sister Leia Organa Solo, Han Solo, and other good friends, Luke was rescued and the Empire's terrible World Devastator weapons were destroyed.

In a final confrontation with the Emperor himself, Luke and Leia joined together as Jedi in the Force. Enveloped in light, the Emperor fell victim to his own cataclysmic dark-side energy!

Long before the cloned Emperor's demise, the evil ruler initiated an elite corps of seven warriors whom he empowered with the dark side of the Force. These "dark Jedi," as he called them, were authorized to put into action his master plan to retake the Galaxy: Operation Shadow Hand.

Following the disappearance of their Emperor, the Imperial elite, under the command of Darkside Executor Sedriss, initiated a series of assaults against the world in proximity to the Galactic Core.

Luke Skywalker, in the meantime, had found clues in the Jedi Holocron which made him believe that some Jedi Knights might have survived Darth Vader's program of extermination.

Near the Cron Drift, in the derelict space city Nespis VIII, Luke discovered the fallen Jedi Kam Solusar. With great difficulty, Luke managed to free Solusar from the dark side. In gratitude, Solusar agreed to join Luke in reviving the ancient company of Jedi Knights.

As Luke returns to Pinnacle Base, Darkside Executor Sedriss is going forward with Operation Shadow Hand. Sedriss and his men are preparing to deliver the Empire's discipline to a renegade manufacturing world at the fringes of the Galactic Core.

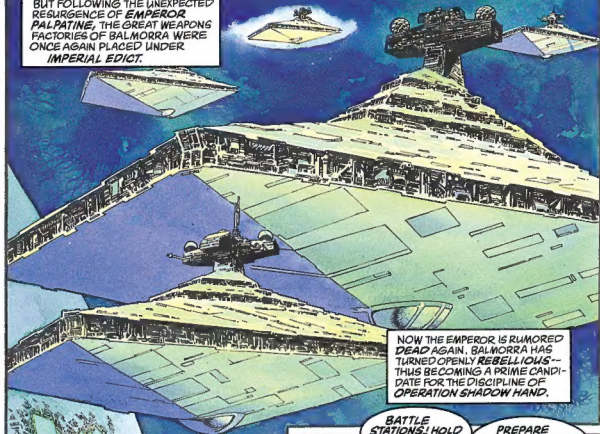


THE **AVENGER** HAS ACHIEVED HYPERSPACE TERMINUS, SIR. THE FLEET IS ASSEMBLED.

WE ARE READY TO **ANNIHILATE** THE PLANET ON YOUR COMMAND!

THE PLANET **BALMORRA** IS A SUBGATED FACTORY WORLD, PRIME BUILDER OF THE AGILE **AT-ST** WALKER. AFTER THE BATTLE OF ENDOR, THE **BALMORRANS** WERE LIBERATED BY THE REBEL ALLIANCE AND ENJOYED FREEDOM FOR FIVE YEARS.

BUT FOLLOWING THE UNEXPECTED RESURGENCE OF **EMPEROR PALPATINE**, THE GREAT WEAPONS FACTORIES OF **BALMORRA** WERE ONCE AGAIN PLACED UNDER **IMPERIAL EDICT**.



NOW THE EMPEROR IS RUMORED **DEAD** AGAIN. **BALMORRA** HAS TURNED OPENLY **REBELLIOUS**--THUS BECOMING A PRIME CANDIDATE FOR THE DISCIPLINE OF **OPERATION SHADOW HAND**.

BATTLE STATIONS! HOLD YOUR FIRE!

PREPARE TO LAUNCH TROOP CARRIERS AND ATTACK DROIDS!

I NEVER TRUSTED **GOVERNOR BELTANE**.

FOR YEARS HE HAS BOASTED THAT HIS **WAR MACHINES** WERE THE ONLY REASON FOR THE EMPIRE'S SUCCESS!





EXECUTOR SEDRISS!
WHAT'S THE MEANING OF
THIS? HAS THE EMPIRE
GONE MAD?

DON'T PLAY
THE INNOCENT,
BELTANE.

WE KNOW
YOU'RE ARMING
THE REBELS.

I'M HERE TO GIVE
YOU THE OPPORTUNITY
TO SAVE FACE--



--SURRENDER
ALL YOUR OPERATIONS
AT ONCE AND BE
EXECUTED.

OTHERWISE
I WILL COME DOWN
THERE AND DESTROY
YOU.



I DON'T
UNDERSTAND YOUR
PROBLEM, SEDRISS...
AREN'T OUR FACTORIES
STILL SUPPLYING YOUR
MOST ADVANCED
ARMOR?

YOU CAN'T
DESTROY US--YOU
NEED US.



THEY DO HAVE
LETH'S NEW WAR
DROIDS IN PRODUCTION, SIR--THE
SD-10s.

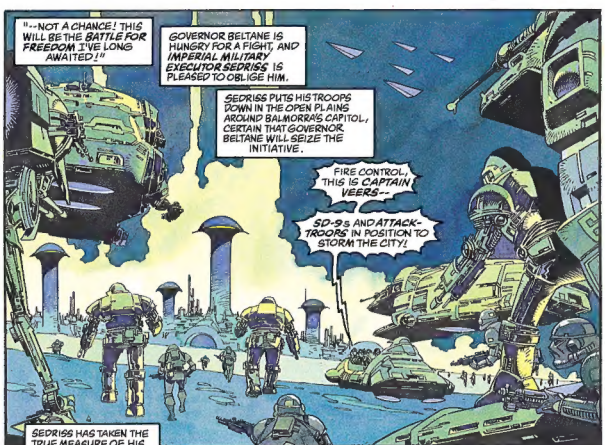
I KNOW, MORDI. I
NEED THOSE DROIDS TO
SMASH THE REBELS... THAT'S
WHY I DON'T SIMPLY WIPE
OUT BELTANE... AND
HIS PLANET!

FORTUNATELY, THE
EMPEROR HAS GIVEN US
SOMETHING BALMORRA
LACKS--THE DARK SIDE
OF THE FORCE.



BELTANE--OUR
TROOPS WILL LAND
AT ONCE TO ACCEPT
YOUR SURRENDER.

SURRENDER,
SEDRISS--?



"...NOT A CHANCE! THIS
WILL BE THE BATTLE FOR
FREEDOM I'VE LONG
AWAITED!"

GOVERNOR BELTANE IS
HUNGRY FOR A FIGHT, AND
IMPERIAL MILITARY
EXECUTOR SEDRISS IS
PLEASED TO OBLIGE HIM.

SEDRISS PUTS HIS TROOPS
DOWN IN THE OPEN PLAINS
AROUND BALMORRA'S CAPITAL,
CERTAIN THAT GOVERNOR
BELTANE WILL SEIZE THE
INITIATIVE.

FIRE CONTROL,
THIS IS CAPTAIN
VEERS--

SD-9s AND ATTACK-
TROOPS IN POSITION TO
STORM THE CITY!

SEDRISS HAS TAKEN THE
TRUE MEASURE OF HIS
OPPONENT. NOT ONLY IS
BELTANE HUNGRY TO
THROW OFF THE IMPERIAL
YOKE--

--AS THE CITY GATES
OPEN, BELTANE PROVES
HE HAS THE WAR MACHINES
TO DO IT!

I DETECT 36,000 STORMTROOPERS,
700 AT-ST CLASS ASSAULT VEHICLES,
AND 382 SD-9 WAR DROIDS, SIR!

SD-10s... TARGET
ALL IMPERIAL WALKERS
AND BATTLE DROIDS!

THE IMPERIAL OBJECTIVE IS TO SEIZE BALMORRA WITHOUT DESTROYING ANY OF ITS MANUFACTURING CAPABILITY.

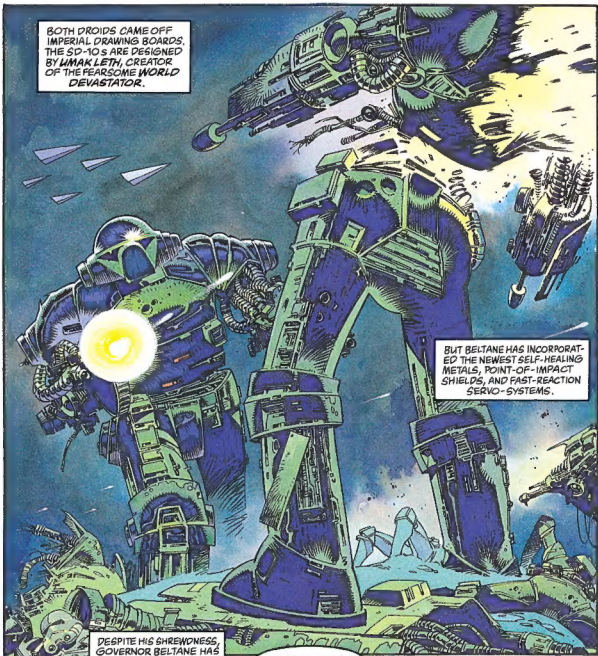
TO DO THAT, SEDRISS MUST USE GROUND FORCES, PERHAPS SACRIFICING THOUSANDS OF STORMTROOPERS BEFORE THE BATTLE IS DECIDED!

BALMORRA UNLEASHES THE LATEST, MOST ADVANCED WAR DROIDS FROM ITS ASSEMBLY LINES--THE SD-10 S...

...WHILE SEDRISS DEPLOYS LAST YEAR'S MODEL!

WE HAVE THE SD-9 S OUT-MATCHED, SIR... ALL THEIR ATTACK STRATEGIES ARE IN OUR MEMORY BANKS.

YEAH-- AND GOVERNOR BELTANE MADE SURE YOU WERE PROGRAMMED WITH UNBEATABLE COUNTER-MOVES!



BOTH DROIDS CAME OFF
IMPERIAL DRAWING BOARDS.
THE SD-10S ARE DESIGNED
BY UMAK LETH, CREATOR
OF THE FEARSOME WORLD
DEVASTATOR.

The main illustration shows a massive, blue and silver Imperial Devastator droid standing in a desolate, rocky landscape. It has a large, glowing yellow eye on its left side. In the background, a smaller droid is flying through the air, and another is visible on the right. The sky is a mix of blue and yellow, suggesting a bright light source or explosion.

BUT BELTANE HAS INCORPORATED
THE NEWEST SELF-HEALING
METALS, POINT-OF-IMPACT
SHIELDS, AND FAST-REACTION
SERVO-SYSTEMS.

DESPITE HIS SHREWDNESS,
GOVERNOR BELTANE HAS
FAILED TO RECKON WITH
THE FORESIGHT OF THE
EMPEROR AND HIS
MILITARY EXECUTOR!

THE FOOL HAS
THROWN EVERYTHING
AT US. THE TRAP IS
SPRUNG--!

PULL BACK
THE TROOPS,
MORDI.

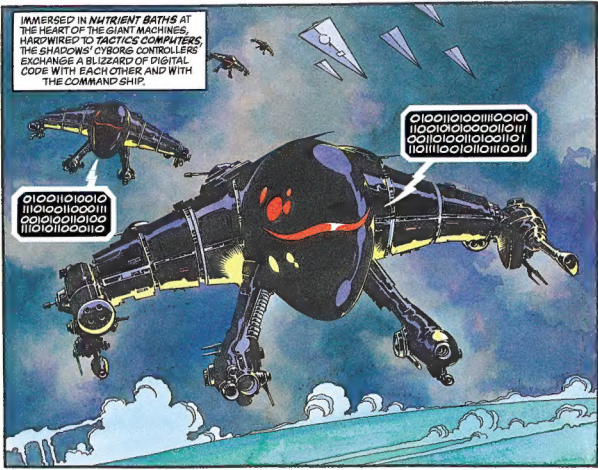
GLADLY,
SEDRISS.



BEFORE HIS RECENT DEMISE, THE EMPEROR BEGAN MANUFACTURING A POWERFUL NEW ATTACK-FIGHTER ON SECURE WORLDS DEEP IN THE GALACTIC CORE.

SHADOW DROIDS AWAY!

CALLED SHADOW DROIDS, ANOTHER OF UMAK LETH'S MURDEROUS WONDERS, THESE SPACE-FARING WAR MACHINES ARE BUILT AROUND THE BRAINS OF FALLEN IMPERIAL FIGHTER ACES.



IMMERSED IN NUTRIENT BATHS AT THE HEART OF THE GIANT MACHINES, HARDWIRED TO TACTICS COMPUTERS, THE SHADOWS' CYBORG CONTROLLERS EXCHANGE A BLIZZARD OF DIGITAL CODE WITH EACH OTHER AND WITH THE COMMAND SHIP.

010011010010
11101001100011
0010100110100
1101011000110

010011010011100101
110010101000011011
001101001101001101
1101110010110110011



UNIDENTIFIED
ASSAILANT
AT TWELVE-
ZERO...RETARGET
ALL-- KZZZT--
BRZZTT--*

IT IS ALSO RUMORED
THE EMPEROR HAS
GIVEN THE SHADOWS
AN ADVANTAGE NO
OPPONENT CAN
MATCH--

--THE CYBERPILOT
BRAINS ARE EMPOWERED
BY THE DARK SIDE!

GOVERNOR!
THE IMPS HAVE
SOME NEW KIND
OF ASSAULT
CRAFT, SIR ...
MAKIN' A MESS
OF THE SDS.

THE EMPIRE IS
CHEATING, SIR...IT
IS BYPASSING ITS
OWN SUPPLY
NETWORK!

IT'S MOVED
TOP-SECRET PROJECTS
TO THE DEEP CORE!

YES... IF THE IMPERIALS
HAD DONE ANYTHING LESS,
THEY WOULDN'T BE GALACTIC
RULERS, WOULD THEY?

...AND I HAVE
TOP-SECRET PROJECTS
OF MY OWN!

IT IS SAID THAT THE FIRST ART OF WAR IS **SECRECY**.

YOUR OPPONENT MUST NOT KNOW YOUR **TRUE CAPABILITIES**--UNTIL IT IS TOO LATE.

UNKNOWN TO THE EMPIRE, BALMORRA HAS BEEN DEVELOPING ITS OWN WEAPONS DESIGNS, MAKING ITS OWN ADVANCES IN THE ART OF WARFARE.

USING THEIR YEARS OF EXPERIENCE BUILDING WAR DROIDS, THE BALMORRANS HAVE BEEN WORKING ON A NASTY BEHEMOTH THEY CALL THE **X-1 VIPER AUTOMADON**.

ITS ADVANCED TECHNOLOGY INCLUDES A BREAKTHROUGH IN THE ART OF DEFENSE:

MOLECULAR SHIELDING THAT ABSORBS THE ENERGY OF AN ATTACKER'S BLASTS, AND CHANNELS IT DIRECTLY TO A WAR DROID'S OWN TURBOBLASERS!

GOVERNOR BELTANE PLANS TO OFFER THIS NEW WAR DROID TO THE **REBEL ALLIANCE**...

10110100110001
0010001101011
110111001010110

THE VIPER HAS YET TO BE **BATTLE-TESTED**.

NOW'S AS GOOD A TIME AS ANY!

WHAT'S THIS? WHY WASN'T I TOLD?!

I WANT THOSE NEW WAR MACHINES FOR THE EMPIRE! GET BELTANE ON THE COMM SCREEN!

OBTUSELY, BELTANE HAS BROKEN HIS TREATY WITH THE EMPIRE, SIR!

HIS PLANET DESERVES TO DIE!

BUT SEDRISS ISN'T READY TO UNLEASH HIS STAR DESTROYERS AGAINST BALMORRA-- YET.

OKAY, BELTANE-- YOU'VE PROVED YOUR POINT.

WHAT DO YOU WANT FOR THOSE NEW DROIDS?

YOU CAN HAVE THEM CHEAPLY, SEDRISS--

BALMORRA WANTS FREEDOM, NO MORE, NO LESS.

ONCE WE ARE FREE, WE'LL SELL YOU ARMS ON A CONTRACT BASIS... IF WE CHOOSE TO.

ARE YOU INSANE? THE EMPEROR WON'T STAND FOR IT! HE DOESN'T BUY WEAPONS FROM FREE PLANETS!

FROM WHAT I HEAR, THE EMPEROR DOESN'T BUY WEAPONS FROM ANYBODY--

--HE'S DEAD.

YES, WELL...

YOUR POINT IS WELL TAKEN. I'LL SEND REPRESENTATIVES DOWN IN AN HOUR TO DRAW UP TERMS.

EXECUTOR SEDRISS, YOU ARE A MAN OF FINE PERCEPTION!

I DON'T UNDERSTAND, SIR! WHY DON'T WE VAPORIZE THEIR CITIES AND BE DONE WITH THEM?

I AGREE WITH VILL GOIR. THE OTHER WEAPONS WORLDS MAY GET SIMILAR IDEAS.

WAR IS MORE THAN A MATTER OF VENGEANCE, MORDI.

ONE OF THE SUBTLETIES OF THE MILITARY ART IS USING YOUR ENEMY'S RESOURCES TO DEFEAT HIM.

I WANT THOSE NEW DROIDS FOR THE EMPIRE AND I WANT THEM NOW. WE'LL AGREE TO ANYTHING BELTANE WANTS.

ONCE I TAKE POSSESSION OF THOSE WAR DROIDS-- AND THE MEN WHO DESIGNED THEM-- I WILL REDUCE BALMORRA TO SPACE DUST!

FRANKLY, I DON'T INTEND TO WASTE ANY MORE TIME WITH LITTLE FISH LIKE BELTANE--

"-- I HAVE A MORE
IMPORTANT ADVERSARY
TO DEAL WITH BEFORE
THE EMPEROR'S RETURN."

LUKE?
IS THAT
YOU?

YEAH--
I'M
BACK!--

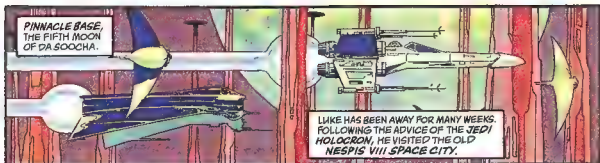
--AND I'VE
BROUGHT A
FRIEND!

READY TO
TAKE HER IN,
KAM?

I'M WITH
YOU, LUKE!

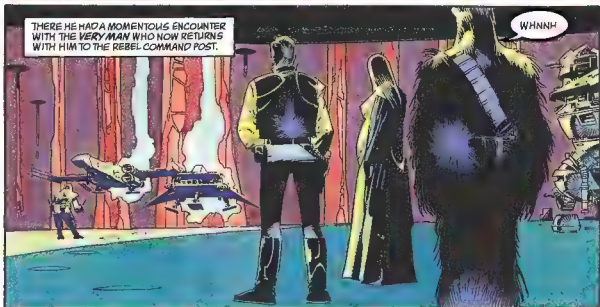
THE JEDI
KNIGHTS WILL
RISE AGAIN!





PINNACLE BASE,
THE FIFTH MOON
OF DA SOOCHA.

LUKE HAS BEEN AWAY FOR MANY WEEKS.
FOLLOWING THE ADVICE OF THE JEDI
HOLOCRON, HE VISITED THE OLD
NESPIS VIII SPACE CITY.



THERE HE HAD A MOMENTOUS ENCOUNTER
WITH THE **VERY MAN** WHO NOW RETURNS
WITH HIM TO THE REBEL COMMAND POST.

WHNNH



LEIA...THIS IS
KAM SOLUSAR...
A JEDI KNIGHT

A...
JEDI--?



YES. I WAS
APPRENTICED TO
THE GREAT JEDI
MASTER, **RANIK
SOLUSAR**--MY
FATHER.

NOW I HAVE
BEGUN MY SERVICE
UNDER **LUKE
SKYWALKER**.

LEIA FEELS THE STRENGTH
OF THE **FORCE** IN **KAM
SOLUSAR**'S HEART. WONDER
OF WONDERS... SHE AND
LUKE ARE NO LONGER
ALONE!



WHERE IS
EVERYBODY?

YOU'RE JUST
IN TIME, **LUKE**...
THERE'S A **BIG
MEETING** GOING
ON.

THINGS
ARE REALLY
STARTING
TO POP--

MON MOTHMA, LEADER OF THE REBEL ALLIANCE, IS ELATED TO LEARN THAT ANOTHER JEDI HAS AT LAST BEEN FOUND!

OKAY-- I'LL BACKTRACK FOR THE LATE ARRIVALS...

GOVERNOR BELTANE OF BALMORRA, AN INDUSTRIAL PLANET IMPORTANT TO THE EMPIRE, HAS DEFEATED THE EMPIRE'S FORCES IN OPEN BATTLE...

A JEDI-- THIS IS A VERY GREAT DAY FOR THE ALLIANCE.

TAKE A SEAT, MY FRIENDS. GENERAL CALRISSIAN IS TELLING US EXCITING NEWS.

BELTANE'S A PRACTICAL MAN... HE'S STILL DEALING WITH THE EMPIRE...

... BUT HE KNOWS THE SURVIVAL OF HIS PEOPLE DEPENDS ON THE RAPID RESTORATION OF THE REPUBLIC...

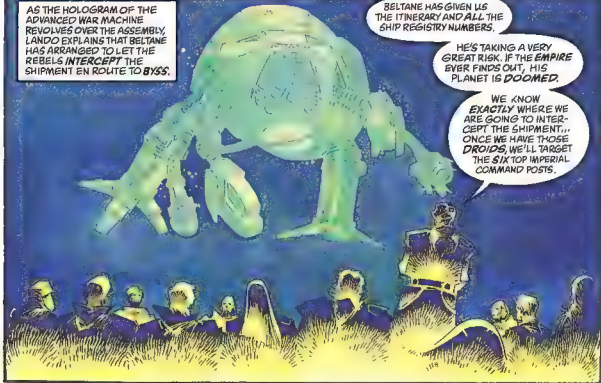
HE HAS OFFERED US A COUP-- A CARGO OF THESE NEW S-1 VIPER AUTOMADON WAR DROIDS HE'S JUST SOLD TO THE IMPS.

AS THE HOLOGRAM OF THE ADVANCED WAR MACHINE REVOLVES OVER THE ASSEMBLY, LANDO EXPLAINS THAT BELTANE HAS ARRANGED TO LET THE REBELS INTERCEPT THE SHIPMENT EN ROUTE TO BYSS.

BELTANE HAS GIVEN US THE ITINERARY AND ALL THE SHIP REGISTRY NUMBERS.

HE'S TAKING A VERY GREAT RISK. IF THE EMPIRE EVER FINDS OUT, HIS PLANET IS DOOMED.

WE KNOW EXACTLY WHERE WE ARE GOING TO INTERCEPT THE SHIPMENT... ONCE WE HAVE THOSE DROIDS, WE'LL TARGET THE SIX TOP IMPERIAL COMMAND POSTS.





I'VE GOT A BETTER IDEA--

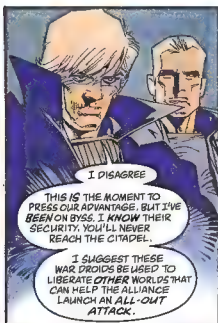
-- LET THE SHIPMENT GO THROUGH TO BYSS-- BUT WE'LL PACK 'EM WITH A CARGO OF REBEL TROOPS.

WHEN WE REACH BYSS, WE WHEEL OUT THE NEW DROIDS AND MAKE A DASH FOR THE CITADEL.



THAT'S A DARING PLAN, GENERAL ANTILLES. I LIKE IT!

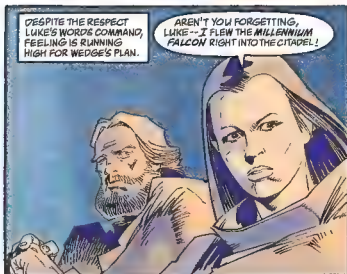
A QUICK THRUST TO THE CITADEL AND THE WAR IS OVER!



I DISAGREE

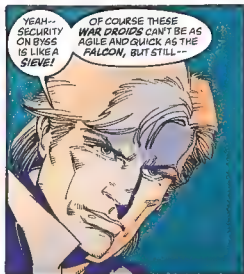
THIS IS THE MOMENT TO PRESS OUR ADVANTAGE. BUT I'VE BEEN ON BYSS. I KNOW THEIR SECURITY. YOU'LL NEVER REACH THE CITADEL.

I SUGGEST THESE WAR DROIDS BE USED TO LIBERATE OTHER WORLDS THAT CAN HELP THE ALLIANCE LAUNCH AN ALL-OUT ATTACK.



DESPITE THE RESPECT LUKE'S WORDS COMMAND, FEELING IS RUNNING HIGH FOR WEDGE'S PLAN.

AREN'T YOU FORGETTING, LUKE-- I FLEW THE MILLENNIUM FALCON RIGHT INTO THE CITADEL!



YEAH-- SECURITY ON BYSS IS LIKE A SIEVE!

OF COURSE THESE WAR DROIDS CAN'T BE AS AGILE AND QUICK AS THE FALCON, BUT STILL--



DON'T FORGET-- WE'LL HAVE SURPRISE ON OUR SIDE, IN AN ODDS-DOWN SITUATION THAT COUNTS FOR A LOT!

I AGREE WITH WEDGE. MY RECOMMENDATION TO THE ALLIANCE WOULD BE TO STRIKE NOW, AT THE CENTER OF IMPERIAL CONTROL!

THAT WOULD BE MY OPINION ALSO, GENERAL CALRISSIAN

WITH THE EMPEROR OUT OF THE WAY, THERE'S A GOOD CHANCE THE IMPERIAL BIG SHOTS ARE AT EACH OTHER'S THROATS!

THEIR RESPONSE TO A DIRECT ATTACK WILL BE SLUGGISH AT BEST!

SUDDENLY, IT SEEMS LIKE THE WHOLE ALLIANCE HAS TURNED AGAINST LUKE...

LUKE, WE CERTAINLY RESPECT YOUR CONCERNS...

DO WHAT YOU HAVE TO DO TO REESTABLISH THE JEDI...

...AND WE WILL DO WHAT WE HAVE TO DO, TO FULFILL OUR RESPONSIBILITIES TO THE ALLIANCE.

BUT WE CAN'T AFFORD TO WAIT-- WE MUST STRIKE NOW... AT THE HEART OF THE EMPIRE.

AS THE STRATEGY MEETING BREAKS UP, MON MOTHMA ISSUES A STRICT ADMONITION OF TOTAL SECRECY. IT IS BELIEVED THAT IMPERIAL SPIES HAVE INFILTRATED THE LOWER ECHELONS OF THE ALLIANCE!

LUKE, LEIA, AND KAM SOLUSAR WITHDRAW TO LEIA'S CHAMBERS TO DISCUSS JEDI MATTERS.

LUKE, I HOPE THERE'S NOT GOING TO BE A CONFLICT BETWEEN YOU AND THE ALLIANCE

I DON'T SEE A PROBLEM. THE ALLIANCE OBVIOUSLY HAS TO BE THINKING IN TERMS OF IMMEDIATE GAINS.

WE JEDI WILL DO WHAT WE MUST.

I'M WITH LUKE... I DON'T THINK MON MOTHMA KNOWS WHAT SHE'S GETTING INTO.

THE EMPEROR HAS A NEW ELITE CORPS OF DARK-SIDE WARRIORS... THEY'RE VERY POWERFUL.

I KNOW... I WAS ONE OF THEM.



THE HOLOCRON SUGGESTED THAT IMPORTANT JEDI ARTIFACTS MAY SURVIVE ON OSSUS... A PLANET WHICH USED TO BE A CENTER OF JEDI TEACHING.

KAM AND I ARE PLANNING AN EXPEDITION.

I SPENT MANY HOURS WITH THE HOLOCRON WHILE YOU WERE GONE, LUKE.

THE HOLOCRON TOLD ME THAT VIMA-DA-BODA CAN HELP US...

I NEED TO FIND HER, BEFORE SHE DIES.



YOU NEED TO GO INTO HIDING, LEIA... UNTIL YOUR CHILD IS BORN.

HE WILL BE A VERY GREAT JEDI.

LEIA IS SIX MONTHS PREGNANT WITH HER THIRD CHILD... AND LUKE KNOWS THAT ALL LEIA'S CHILDREN WILL PLAY A PART IN THE RETURN OF THE JEDI KNIGHTS.



YOU'RE RIGHT, LUKE... BUT FIRST I WILL FIND VIMA.

THEN HAN AND I PLAN TO SPEND TIME IN SECLUSION WITH OUR CHILDREN, AS YOU SUGGEST.

WE'VE ONLY SEEN THE TWINS A FEW TIMES A YEAR SINCE THEY WERE BORN!



HMM... SO THIS IS THE FAMOUS HOLOCRON! NOT MUCH TO LOOK AT.

AS KAM SOLUSAR HOLDS THE GLOWING HOLOCRON, THE ANCIENT RECORDING DEVICE DETECTS THE PRESENCE OF A JEDI KNIGHT...

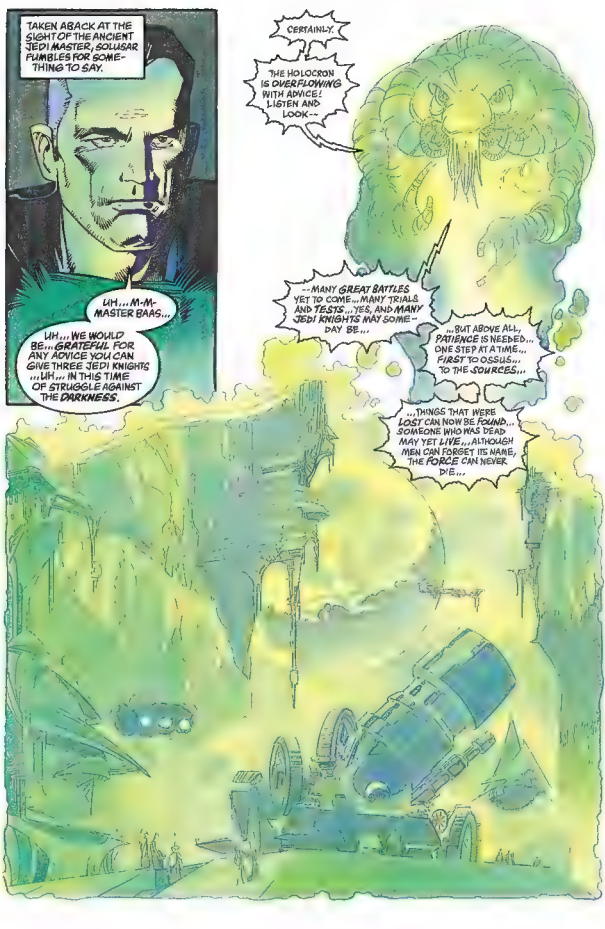


GREETINGS, JEDI!

I AM BODO BAAS, GATEKEEPER OF THE HOLOCRON.

DO YOU HAVE A QUESTION FOR ME?

EH?



TAKEN ABACK AT THE SIGHT OF THE ANCIENT JEDI MASTER, SOLUSAR FUMBLES FOR SOMETHING TO SAY.

UH... M-M-MASTER BAAS...

UH... WE WOULD BE... GRATEFUL FOR ANY ADVICE YOU CAN GIVE THREE JEDI KNIGHTS... UH... IN THIS TIME OF STRUGGLE AGAINST THE DARKNESS.

CERTAINLY.

THE HOLOCRON IS OVERFLOWING WITH ADVICE! LISTEN AND LOOK--

--MANY GREAT BATTLES YET TO COME... MANY TRIALS AND TESTS... YES, AND MANY JEDI KNIGHTS MAY SOME DAY BE...

...BUT ABOVE ALL, PATIENCE IS NEEDED... ONE STEP AT A TIME... FIRST TO OSSUS... TO THE SOURCES...

...THINGS THAT WERE LOST CAN NOW BE FOUND... SOMEONE WHO WAS DEAD MAY YET LIVE... ALTHOUGH MEN CAN FORGET ITS NAME, THE FORCE CAN NEVER DIE...

AS THE THREE JEDI BEHOLD THE HOLOCRON'S IMAGES OF ANCIENT OSSUS, THE **MILLENNIUM FALCON** IS BEING PREPPED FOR A RETURN TO THE SMUGGLER'S MOON **NAR SHADDAA!**

NO, ARTOO... THEY AREN'T TAKING US WITH THEM. FRANKLY, I'M RELIEVED. AND YOU SHOULD BE TOO.

NOW YOU'LL BE ABLE TO GET THAT COMPLETE OVER-HAUL YOU KEEP PUTTING OFF!

WHRR BIP
BREETZ

BKT VIP TWOOT
BREET POOPADIT
PAZEET PORT!

YES I KNOW A DROID ISN'T SUPPOSED TO REST LIKE A HUMAN...

...BUT SOMETIMES I WONDER ABOUT HUMANS-- THE ONES I KNOW NEVER SEEM TO SLOW DOWN!

HAN'S OLD FRIENDS **SALLA ZEN** AND **SHUG NIX** ARE ANXIOUS TO GET BACK TO THE SPACEPORT MOON... AND TO FIXING SHIPS AND HAULING CARGO!

FIRST THING WE GET BACK I'M FINDIN' A SHIP THAT'S MAKIN' THE **BYSS** RUN.

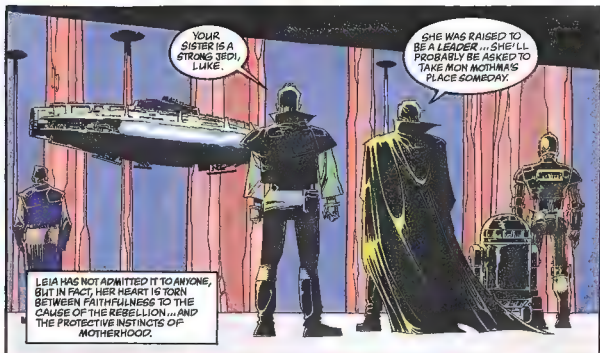
I NEED THE **STARLIGHT** INTRUDER.

ME, I'M ITCHIN' TO GET MY HANDS ON MY FAVORITE **HYDROSPANNER** AND START TEARIN' DOWN A LIGHT-DRIVE--

-- I'M TOO OLD FOR ALL THIS FIGHTIN'!

SALLA... SHUG... YOU GUYS ABOUT READY?





YOUR
SISTER IS A
STRONG JEDI,
LUKE.

SHE WAS RAISED TO
BE A LEADER... SHE'LL
PROBABLY BE ASKED TO
TAKE MON MOTHMA'S
PLACE SOMEDAY.

LEIA HAS NOT ADMITTED IT TO ANYONE,
BUT IN FACT, HER HEART IS TORN
BETWEEN FAITHFULNESS TO THE
CAUSE OF THE REBELLION...AND
THE PROTECTIVE INSTINCTS OF
MOTHERHOOD.



AS ALWAYS WITH LEIA, THE
CAUSE OF THE REBELLION
GAINS THE UPPER HAND!

SO HAN AND LEIA
AND CHEWBACCA ARE
OFF TO NAR SHADDAA...
WHEN DO YOU 'N' ME
LEAVE FOR OSSUS?

TOMORROW.
FIRST WE NEED
TO TALK.

I WANT YOU TO TELL
ME EVERYTHING YOU CAN
ABOUT THIS "SEDRISS"
CHARACTER.



BYSS.

AS REBELS AND JEDI PUT THEIR
PLANS INTO ACTION, IMPERIAL
EXECUTOR SEDRISS HAS NOT
BEEN IDLE

I-7 HOWLRUNNERS,
YOU ARE CLEAR TO DOCK
IN THE CITADEL.

IT IS KNOWN AMONG THE
IMPERIAL LEADERSHIP
THAT A NUMBER OF HIDDEN
CLONE TANKS SURVIVED
SKYWALKER'S ASSAULT.

BUT CERTAIN POWERFUL
ADEPTS, MEMBERS OF THE
EMPEROR'S INNER CIRCLE,
ARE SPREADING RUMORS
THAT THE EMPEROR WILL
NOT TAKE A NEW CLONE BODY.

THESE SAME ADEPTS ARE
THREATENING TO HAVE SEDRISS
EXECUTED FOR HIS FAILURE IN
THE BATTLE OF BALMORRA.

SEDRISS RETURNS
TO BYSS--TO MAKE
SURE THAT NEVER
HAPPENS--

--AND TO SECURE HIS RIGHTS
AS DARK-SIDE EXECUTOR AND
MILITARY DICTATOR OF ALL
IMPERIAL FORCES.

AT THAT VERY MOMENT, IN THE
EMPEROR'S CLONE LABS, NEFTA
AND SA-DI, TWO OF THE
EMPEROR'S CLOSEST FRIENDS,
ARE HARD AT WORK...

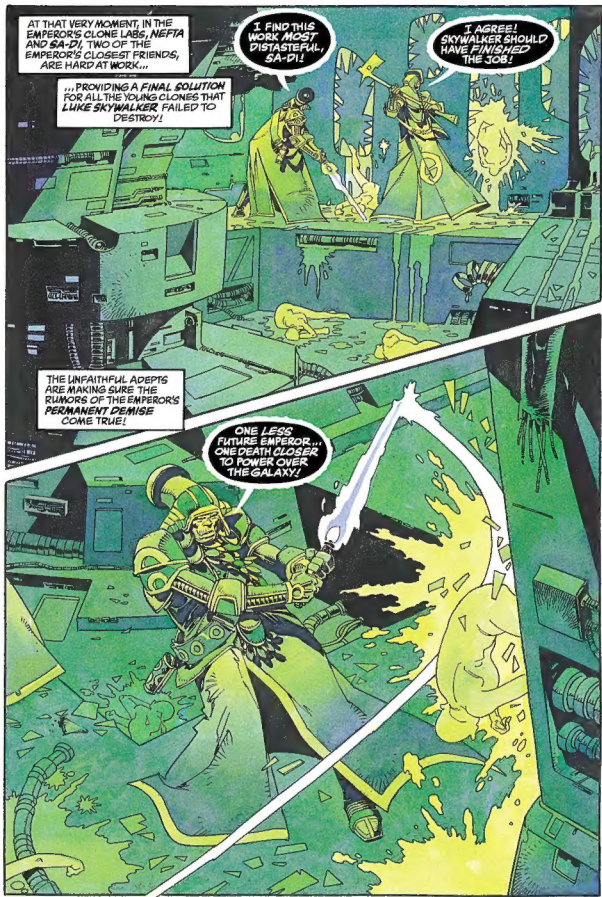
...PROVIDING A FINAL SOLUTION
FOR ALL THE YOUNG CLONES THAT
LUKE SKYWALKER FAILED TO
DESTROY!

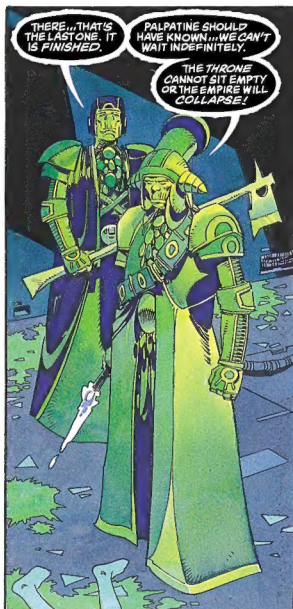
I FIND THIS
WORK MOST
DISTASTEFUL,
SA-DI!

I AGREE!
SKYWALKER SHOULD
HAVE FINISHED
THE JOB!

THE UNFAITHFUL ADEPTS
ARE MAKING SURE THE
RUMORS OF THE EMPEROR'S
PERMANENT DEMISE
COME TRUE!

ONE LESS
FUTURE EMPEROR...
ONE DEATH CLOSER
TO POWER OVER
THE GALAXY!





THERE...THAT'S
THE LAST ONE. IT
IS FINISHED.

PALPATINE SHOULD
HAVE KNOWN...WE CAN'T
WAIT INDEFINITELY.

THE THRONE
CANNOT SIT EMPTY
OR THE EMPIRE WILL
COLLAPSE!



NEFTA...SA-DI...
WHAT'S GOING
ON HERE?

SEDRISS...YOU
DARE TO SHOW YOUR
FACE IN THE CITADEL
AFTER YOUR SHAME-
FUL DEFEAT ON
BALMORRA?



IT IS YOU WHO
HAVE SPREAD THE
RUMOR THAT THE
EMPEROR IS
GONE FOR GOOD--

--AND NOW
YOU HOPE TO
MAKE CERTAIN
OF IT.

MY
INTUITION
WAS RIGHT--
NONE OF
YOU ARE TO BE
TRUSTED.

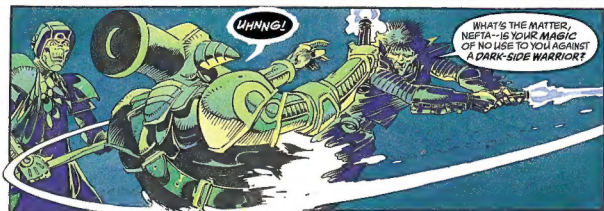
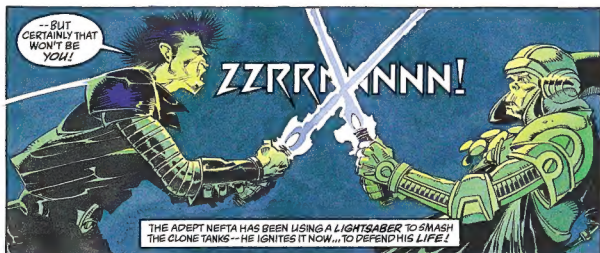


WE HAD TO DO
IT, SEDRISS...PALPATINE
IS TRAPPED IN THE NETHER-
WORLD--HE COULD BE
THERE FOR A THOUSAND
YEARS!



SOMEONE HAS
TO RULE THE EMPIRE,
SEDRISS--!

YES, THAT'S TRUE...
ONE POWERFUL INDIVIDUAL
MUST RULE--



--REBORN
ONCE MORE!

I SEE AT LEAST ONE
OF MY CHARGE MEN HAS
BEEN FAITHFUL DURING
MY ABSENCE.

MY MASTER!

I HAVE STOOD
FAST UPON THE DAY
OF YOUR RETURN,
EMPEROR, THESE
ARE THE LAST
OF THE TRAITORS.

GOOD. NOW
WE MUST PROCEED
WITH OUR PLAN.

THE REBELS ARE
OVERCONFIDENT. WE
WILL MOVE QUICKLY
TO FINISH THEM.

BRING ME THE WOMAN
JEDI BEFORE SHE HAS HER
THIRD CHILD... AND SET ALL
YOUR FORCES AGAINST
LUKE SKYWALKER!

AS FOR THE ARMIES
OF THE ALLIANCE, I HAVE
MORE THAN A FEW SURPRISES
IN STORE FOR THEM!